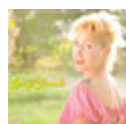

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# New Orleans woman files fake police report that puts landlord in jail

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By **John Simerman, The Times-Picayune**

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A New Orleans woman has pleaded guilty to filing a false crime report that landed a Belle Chasse woman in jail and raised questions about why a detective failed to quickly discover the lie.

Robin Murray, 26, agreed Friday to serve as much as 18 months behind bars in a plea deal that includes paying restitution to real estate appraiser Ingrid Leverett, who was wrongly accused by Murray of stealing a laptop from her car in an Algiers parking lot last March.

Murray lodged her false claim just days after she was arrested in Jefferson Parish for stealing a stove, microwave oven and dishwasher from the home she was leasing from Leverett. Leverett had evicted Murray for failing to pay rent.

Murray, niece of state Sen. Edwin Murray, accused Leverett of driving up in her BMW and swiping the laptop. But Leverett had witnesses and a solid alibi: She had traded in the BMW more than a month earlier.

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Leverett said the officer who investigated Murray's claim, NOPD Detective Kevin Bell, repeatedly accused her over the phone of lying, claiming he had video footage of the theft, before securing a warrant for her arrest.

"It was like he had a vendetta against me," she said. "It was really, really strange."

An internal probe cleared Bell and his supervisors of any wrongdoing. But a recent draft report from **Independent Police Monitor Susan Hutson** criticizes how Bell and others handled the case and calls for more investigation into whether they neglected to poke around before hauling Leverett to jail.

Murray was on probation at the time, with a criminal record that included a conviction for lying on a casino job application, "and had motive to frame Ms. Leverett for burglary," according to Hutson's draft report.

"In Ms. Leverett's case, her alibi information was readily available and was volunteered by Ms. Leverett in her initial phone conversation with Det. Bell," the draft report states.

Leverett also disputes a claim by Bell that he read her her rights and asked her to come in for questioning.

She said six U.S. marshals and two Plaquemines Parish officers showed up at her door last April and arrested her. Her blood pressure shot up, she said, and she was hospitalized before being taken to Orleans Parish jail, where sheriff's deputies fitted her for orange jail scrubs, shackled her and held her overnight before she made bond.

New Orleans police reinvestigated the case after she told her story to a WWL-TV reporter. Hutson declined to discuss the draft, saying her report could change significantly.

"It all depends on the department's response to my questions and concerns about the investigation," she said. "There are a lot of questions that we had about it."

Leverett said she filed a federal civil rights lawsuit last week against the New Orleans Police Department.

Murray still faces a Jefferson Parish charge of stealing the appliances.

Orleans Parish Judge Karen Herman is scheduled to sentence Murray on June 15 on one count of making a false statement to police. The plea deal calls for Murray to serve a year if she makes \$8,000 in restitution, 15 months if she pays \$4,500 and 18 months if she fails to pay.

Murray's attorney, Tanzanika Ruffin, said the guilty plea did not require Murray to confess to anything.

"She's trying to do everything she can to get this to move on," Ruffin said. Murray will remain free on \$10,000 bond until the sentencing.

Christopher Bowman, who prosecuted the case against Murray, declined to discuss Bell's investigation, but praised NOPD Detective Gina Cousins for re-investigating.

"She did an outstanding job," he said. "It's difficult to have to prepare to go into court, when the defendant could rely on the initial police report."

Leverett said she still hopes to do a head-to-head lie detector truth-off against the detective, and called Murray's guilty plea only partial consolation for her troubles coming a year after her own arrest.

"I'm more mad at the cops than I am at her," she said.

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May 03, 2011 at 7:28PM

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awesome, now anyone can have anyone arrested now. this will work out great.

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May 03, 2011 at 7:33PM

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Can you say lawsuit.

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May 03, 2011 at 7:44PM

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on probation at the time, with a criminal record that included a conviction for lying on a casino job application....WOW probation for lying on a casino app.....geeze the murderers are that harshly punished.....wanna bet the took it to the limit because of ummmmmmm her "Murry" connections....I'd like to see her rap sheet...

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May 03, 2011 at 7:58PM

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I hope that Det. Bell is terminated, especially with a federal lawsuit on its way.

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May 03, 2011 at 8:01PM

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OK how much time will the cops get for arresting me three times and made up charges when they didn't have a reason to arrest me at all i asked them what were they arresting me for they said we'll think of something ,they charged me twice with drunk in public i asked for a breath test and they told me they dont administer them there ,i said dont you give them for DWI arrest. they told me to go sit down. and i dont drink.the other arrest was obstructing the sidewalk. i told the cops they need to arrest every tourist that stops and look in a shop window or royal street . That's why i hate NOPD.

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**aiolus**

May 04, 2011 at 7:48AM

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Oh, Jared. The next time you get drunk (probably later on this morning), just stay indoors.

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May 03, 2011 at 8:17PM

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Why is it I won't be shocked to find out NOPD Detective Kevin Bell has done this before? Serpas is just another janitor cleaning the building. No goals. Just eating the low-hanging fruit. Until the Feds come in and clean out every last one of these NOPD thugs, New Orleans will continue to be the toilet bowl it is.

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May 03, 2011 at 8:17PM

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Just WHY, do I get the feeling that living in NOLA is like living in a POLICE STATE ??????????????????

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May 03, 2011 at 8:19PM

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"...conviction for lying on a casino job application...."

what is wrong with this picture? when did casino jobs take on the proportion of a federal or state level job? what nimrod legislature pass this crock?

or has TP got it wrong and she failed to disclose a conviction on her application for a casino job?

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May 03, 2011 at 9:24PM

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You have to be licensed by the state to work in a casino. The state police require an unbelievable amount of paperwork from casinos and their employees, and apparently lying during any part of the hiring process is criminal.

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**aiolus**

May 04, 2011 at 7:50AM

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Is thisthingon, I believe casino applications are investigated by state police and, therefore, one can be charged for lying on them.

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May 03, 2011 at 8:24PM

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dark roast what do you know about my uncle and family ? nothing but his and our`s family name cause of his being in office . My uncle had nothing to do with what my cousin done she`s a woman and she has made mistakes and is doing the right thing by owning to her mess up. just like alot of people do.my family has always been talk honesty . but how can some people judge us when they have more drama in their family then we do. no one would even care if my uncle wasn`t in a public office oh and make sure you spell our family name right it`s murray not murry ok dark roast

[Reply](#)[Post new](#)Inappropriate? [Alert us.](#)**dipstikjimmy**

May 03, 2011 at 8:42PM

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lol, I'm sure Uncle Ed's real happy about you taking up for him! lol

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May 03, 2011 at 8:37PM

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"Murray, niece of state Sen. Edwin Murray"

Doesn't that say it all? An overprivileged brat thought the rules didn't apply to her. Maybe Kevin Bell was getting something out of it too. What, precisely, remains to be seen.

All best wishes to Ingrid Leverett in getting some REAL JUSTICE in the end!

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May 03, 2011 at 8:48PM

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Asong as the officer acted in good faith, he should have immunity from a civil action. The person who filed the false report however, better win the lotto.

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